



Happy Holidays!!

I wanted to take this opportunity to wish you and your family the best of the holidays and my best wishes for the coming year of peace and prosperity. My next eNewsletter will be a year in review, but for now, let me share with you some of the latest of the many things going on . . .

Protecting Our Property - Construction Standards and Brush Management

One of the post-fire items I have been working diligently on is updating City ordinances relating to construction standards and brush management. It is important that we both rebuild burned homes and require new construction to use the safest materials available, especially in fire prone areas. Further, it is important that brush management policies be consistent, easy to understand, and adequately protect citizens and their property. It's important to remember there are many areas throughout our City with plenty of brush, so it makes sense to take the steps now to protect our homes.

[For the full details on my proposals, you can read the memorandum I sent to the City Manager, the Mayor and City Council by clicking on this link.](#)

And we have worked on the issue of erosion control as well and I'm pleased to announce that many Tierrasanta open space areas burned in the fire will soon begin erosion restoration work. For private property owners in the high and medium priority areas that have fire damaged property, free sediment and erosion control materials such as fiber rolls and an instructional brochure "Post Fire Best Management Practices (BMPs) For Runoff, Erosion and Sediment Control" are available for self-installation.

[For complete information on the work planned for Tierrasanta as well as many other fire related resources, please visit the Tierrasanta page on my website by clicking on this link.](#)



We have also worked to get City repairs made as quickly as possible. For example, something as simple as replacing the burned out guardrails near Villa Dominique in Tierrasanta required discussions with the City Manager to get the job done faster than the City had planned.

Brush Management - City residents expect to be allowed to maintain a clear area of defensible space from their properties. I understand the need for a balance between erosion controls and clearing fire-prone plants and using fire-retardant

vegetation. I also realize there is a cost associated with brush management. However, the resulting cost of a fire burning through neighborhoods is much greater and much more damaging. There are many residents willing to clear brush immediately surrounding their homes. It is imperative that we give them the legal right and clear direction to do so immediately.

The current brush policy has been interpreted in a restrictive and contradictory manner. For example, one City brochure prohibits planting eucalyptus trees and yet these trees are protected by community open space policies --- even though they are considered by many to be a fire hazard. [In fact, you are welcome to view the City's current \(but soon to be replaced\) brush management and fire safety brochure by clicking on this link.](#)

At my request at City Council, City staff is working at crafting revised standards for brush management that allows a minimum of a 100 foot buffer between homes and brush. Further added into my proposal is the idea that if you as a property owner disagree with the 100 foot buffer as being less than what you consider safe, you will be able to appeal your request to the Fire Department who will have final authority to allow a greater distance of brush clearance.

Construction Standards - This is another area in which the City of San Diego has been behind the times in updating policies that could better protect the public from fires. I'm advocating that we demand more fire retardant construction materials in homes along canyons and open space by adopting standards more stringent than the uniform building code as other cities have done.

Other cities specifically disallow wood shake shingles on new roofs and exterior walls. San Diego should update the municipal code to require Class A roofs on all new construction within the City, and for all roof repairs that constitute over 25% of the existing building or structure's wood exterior wall covering. Conformity with other jurisdictions would both better protect the public and eliminate inconsistencies between jurisdictions that make it difficult for residents and businesses to comply. We are working with our State legislators to help provide incentives for property owners to replace their highly flammable shake roofs. Replacing shake roofs not only protects the homeowner, but their neighbors as well.

Many people who lost their homes will soon be pulling building permits as they begin to rebuild. It makes sense to not allow the same dangerous construction materials that are prone to burn rapidly during a fire. The new ordinances will include any permits now being pulled. That is why at



exterior wall covering

the last City Council meeting I proposed the following:

1. Requiring Class A roofs on all new construction
 2. Requiring shake shingle roofs be replaced with Class A roofs within 25 years from date of adoption
 3. Requiring replacement of shake shingle roofs when repairs of over 25% are made of the existing building or structure's wood
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4. Waiving any building fees when shake shingle roofs are replaced
 5. Prohibiting wood or combustible sidings on new construction adjacent to open space areas
 6. Prohibiting wood fences or other combustible items along areas adjacent to fire prone areas
 7. Increased brush clearing areas for greater defensible space.

Del Cerro Medians and a New Sign!

Motorists on College Avenue near Del Cerro Boulevard were surprised to see a gathering on Saturday morning, December 8. We were celebrating the completion of the Del Cerro Boulevard median and the installation of the Del Cerro community welcome sign. We also celebrated the completion of a modern sidewalk installed on College Boulevard. Del Cerro Brownie Troop 3714 helped out and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Jan Murphy, who lives in District 7 and just happens to be married to Mayor Dick Murphy, and I had the honor of unveiling the beautiful new sign.

Alpha Project and the Holiday Season

There are many wonderful non-profit organizations that deserve our support especially during this holiday season. Let me tell you about one that I have worked with over the years called Alpha Project. The Alpha Project helps others help themselves. The result of this successful partnership has been improved services for District 7 residents and the City of San Diego.

The list of projects is long. For example:

- The City of San Diego contracts with Alpha Project to run the Neil Good Day Center downtown on 17th Street. This center provides mail service, shower facilities, laundry facilities, employment opportunities and mental health counseling.
- They helped District 7 residents by tearing down abandoned crack houses, clearing trash and drug paraphernalia from makeshift homeless campsites, tearing down a



- neighborhood eyesore that was violation of neighborhood code compliance.
- They have helped by painting homes for the elderly, cleaning up Mission Trails Regional Park, picking up trash and clearing shopping carts and junk out of a stream.
- At my request, the Alpha Project is currently helping clear brush in Tierrasanta open space areas to prevent fire disasters such as we just experienced.
- Most recently the Alpha Project came to the rescue of three Tierrasanta residents who lost their home in last month's fire. Their house was the only one in the neighborhood to burn down. However, part of the structure was left standing leaving the homeowners with the daunting task of demolishing what remained and then clearing the mound of rubble.

Bob McElroy founded the Alpha Project in 1986 with the goal of empowering individuals, families, and communities by providing work, recovery and support services to people who are motivated to change their lives and achieve self-sufficiency. San Diego men and women who typically would be lost in a downward spiral are now turning their lives around and finding hope and dignity thanks to the Alpha Project. I've heard their stories and seen amazing transformation take place. I believe that words of support are not enough and so I've taken action to demonstrate my commitment to Alpha Project. Recently I allocated \$14,000 to the Alpha Project for a clinical psychologist for their Metro Hotel Supportive Housing Project and \$20,000 for the Alpha Project's Winter Shelter Program that runs from December through March in downtown San Diego. And, as we did last year, my wife Sally and I held an event called the Fall Fiesta benefiting Alpha Project at our home and raised an additional \$20,000 for the Winter Shelter program. This City sanctioned event is a wonderful opportunity for the public to find out more about this amazing organization.

Since we began the Fall Fiesta, we have received letters from people wanting to know more about Alpha Project and how they can contribute. I invite you to learn more about Alpha Project by visiting their web site at www.alphaproject.org and help out especially during the holiday season.

A New Sign for Allied Gardens

You've probably seen the beautiful new community sign for Allied Gardens. I have been working with community leaders to complete this wonderful new addition. The sign is located at Waring Road and Adobe Falls Road. It serves as a focal point and entrance to the community.

And plans are now underway for a new entrance sign for San Carlos as well.

College Area News

I've asked Bob Heider of Safe Streets Now to help us in District 7. While this will be a big boost to the entire District, it will certainly be welcomed news in the College Area which has been suffering from an increase in what we call "Mini Dorms". Mini Dorms are homes owned by absentee landlords who rent them out to students or other non-traditional family groups. They typically cause all kinds of problems from too many cars to loud late night parties and other nuisances not

normally found in a traditional single family neighborhood. While many folks rent out their properties and that's okay, unfortunately from time to time there are a few bad apples that spoil the neighborhood for everyone.

Bob is the president of the non-profit organization called Safe Streets Now. Safe Streets Now will work with the community to get property owners in compliance with neighborhood codes. This will help address problems associated with mini-dorms, nuisance houses, graffiti and abandoned property. If you have a neighborhood problem that need's the help of Safe Streets Now, please contact my office at (619) 236-6677.

Once again the College Neighborhoods Foundation held their holiday home tour in College View Estates. It was wonderful and my family enjoyed the tour. Six homes were beautifully decorated for the holidays. The Foundation has come up with a fun way to raise funds which they plan to use for their history project. The goal is to compile a history of the community and create an archive for it. The Foundation deserves much credit for their initiative and they definitely have my support.

Past issues of our eNewsletter are available

Keep up to date with the many things going on in and around our neighborhoods. [Click on this link if you'd like to look back at a past issue of my eNewsletter.](#)

Keep up to date on the latest issues within the City by visiting our Website at JimMadaffer.com. If this email was forwarded to you, you can [join our email list by clicking here](#).

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